THEOLOGY

VOL. XLVI NOVEMBER, 1943 No. 281

Religion and Art

IN the persistent and popular controversy about the right relationship of art to religion, the battle of the images has generally succeeded in obscuring the other issues. The use of the arts, the visual arts in particular, though music also comes in question, as a vehicle for expressing religious mysteries has been an inevitable practice, but one that has constantly raised a vehement reaction, rejecting such aids to interpretation as misleading or incongruous. Less popular and less sensational, the more puzzling problem of æsthetic as contrasted with religious experience has been the background rather than the argument of the historic struggle.

In all religious instruction the central theme is the rendering of the transcendental in finite terms, and it is here that the arts have an essential place. Their resources exceed the preciser limits of direct statement and possess not only overtones of meaning but also a power to exalt the mind, so that they both convey concepts and stimulate receptivity. In the visual arts of painting and sculpture this balance between the didactic nature of the content and the æsthetic stimulus of the form is particularly apparent, more easily analysed than in music or architecture, and less complex than the combination of sense and sound in poetry. And it is with these two arts, painting and sculpture, that this brief discussion will deal, taking two main points—first the usefulness of art as an exposition of religion; and second the nature of the response to art, of æsthetic appreciation, as compared with the nature of religious intuition.

That the divinity should be represented in human or animal form is a practice common to most religions at some stage of their development and generally follows the use of some vaguer symbol for that same purpose. The attempt to show the god in the likeness of man answers to the need of fuller knowledge and understanding of the mystery worshipped; but it tends to limit as well as clarify. Our own anthropomorphic terminology may be scriptural in origin, but it is embodied in pictorial traditions which have no small responsibility for much of the sentimental insufficiency of contemporary Christian imagination, and which are often a stumbling-block to those who are no longer reared in those traditions as natural vehicles of thought and who find the bearded benignity of the Father an inappropriate convention. The danger is inherent in the process, that God should be reduced to human level rather than interpreted in human terms, and that Zeus should become the mere hero of a series of wish-fulfilling romances. More direct idolatry was also a constant possibility. The image, which stimulated to devotion by depicting the divinity, might by its own virtue as a stimulus, or even by that association of prayer which as many feel grows about a place, become itself the object of

worship, or more primitively an implement of magic, an embodied charm, into the inner secret of whose power there was no inquiry. The two great religions of the Near East, Judaism and Mohammedanism, had a peculiar awareness of these dangers, and from Judaism Christianity received a fear of idols which clashed sharply with the deep-rooted feeling for the human form that characterized its artistic heritage from Greece and Rome. In the Eastern Church the fear of images almost prevailed, and at periods of the iconoclastic struggle was dominant, leaving in the end a permitted measure of representation, but one rigidly defined by types and iconographical rules. In the West the classical tradition survived. An attempt was made to formulate the part played by the image in the act of worship, and its use was further defended in the famous argument that an unlettered people must be instructed by pictures. But opposition, if sometimes latent, never ceased. Asceticism, as in St Bernard, rejected such easy aids to devotion, permissible perhaps for the parish church, but not for the monk, the athlete of Christ, nor for any who sought the fullness of undistracted inner contemplation; the Reformers found in it a strange variance from scriptural precept and an emotional appeal by which the Church of Rome sought to mislead the people. It was opposed, but it was never defeated; and the varied customs of representational art have played their steady part in the development of Christian thought.

In early practice Christian art borrowed its forms from the Imperial art around it. Pagan designs were frequently adapted with but little alteration to Christian uses, and neither in decorative schemes such as the wall paintings of the catacombs nor in sculptured sarcophagi for Christian burial did the Church show itself in any way an innovator. It seemed content if the reference were made clear by some easily recognizable Christian symbol, and it is probable that a magical rather than a representational intention inspired the work. As is well known, the subjects shown in the catacombs were largely drawn from prayers of the liturgy and invoked deliverance of the soul as Noah, Moses, Jonah or Daniel had been delivered. It is prayer in a visual form, permanent and enduring, set up in some holy place where the suppliant himself cannot be continually present. As the cave men drew deer and other beasts on their rock walls with hopes thereby, or so it is thought, of happier hunting, so these representations are both a perpetual invocation and a strengthening of the hope of salvation by the representation of the act of saving. As the mosque keeper points first to the inscription on the wall where is found the name of God, that being the thing most worthy of observation, so the first requirement of this early religious art was to have some clear reference to sacred events inscribed pictorially. It was a magical sense that long endured, and underlay much ecclesiastical ornament after more rational apologies for it had been propounded.

In the barbarian North-West such an explanation seems particularly cogent. In Rome itself and in the areas of Roman civilization the theory that art was justified by being instructive, *laicorum lectiones et scripturæ*, coupled with the strong classical feeling for true representation, tended always to an accurate portrayal of men and the events

with which they were concerned. Among the northern tribes pattern, the interlacing of lines and the juxtaposition of colours, was the traditional interest. Where they borrowed from Rome, it was the abstract designs of their mosaic pavements which seemed to impress them most. When Christianity brought to them the need for representation of the human form, they still subordinated the figure to the decorative scheme. In many of their illuminated pages, only the head is recognizable as human, and the body merges into a general patterned design. In the so-called Carolingian renaissance these two currents met, and the representational and the decorative appear as almost equally balanced. In the great Romanesque art of the eleventh and twelfth centuries they achieved their fusion and produced a style that has perhaps never been rivalled as ecclesiastical art. For the works of this period at their highest level combine a direct statement of the content with an unrivalled inventiveness in design and detail. The "magic" is there: the subjects are clearly recognizable but set out with a wealth of symbolic accessories which few can have fully understood, themes for exposition by the priest or simple acts of piety in themselves, as carefully worked at some hardly visible altitude as at the eye level on the main doorway. Yet though recognizable they are not familiarized; they are no mere anthropomorphic simplification of sacred facts. The dancing prophet of Souillac, the elongated Christ of Vezelay, the painting of St Paul at Canterbury, the apostles in the porch at Malmesbury are no ordinary forms of men. The strange rhythms of their postures, the folds and flutterings of their garments, the exuberant freedom with which the whole figure bends and sways to its pattern has a vitality and visual stimulus beyond any mere illustration of the event. It is in their linear rhythm that their emotional intensity is expressed, and were they not great achievements of art they might easily be, as much work of this period is, naïve or even grotesque failures considered as illustrations of the sacred story. As it is, their theme is daringly matched with decorative values, so that the fusion of the two is something more deeply moving than would be a more precise chronicling of the event.

Gothic art, the successor to these strange inventive designs, reverted to a more classical tradition. The west door of Chartres subordinates its figure sculpture to the architectural scheme, elongating them to fantastic slenderness; on the south porch the figures stand free of their pillars in confident human comeliness which looks back to Athens and forward to Florence. Humanism had revived, and the Virgin Mother and her Son, the prophets, saints and martyrs, God the Father Himself, took on ideal human forms, the perfection of humanity, not some grandly patterned reference to something superhuman. Soon human emotions were attributed to these lifelike images. The Madonna bows tenderly over her baby, where once she presented the Holy Child in rigid majesty; the Pietà, the mourning over Christ, becomes a common theme, an appeal to religious sentiment, not without its place in religious psychology, certainly not without its dangers. The classical impulse did not at once maintain the field; mixed with its humanism, Gothic retains the curves and angularities of the "barbarian" decorative genius. With the splendours of renaissance art, the perfect human form

becomes the canon of beauty, an ideal well fitted to the Italian patrons of the day, among whom enthusiasm was at a discount, and fashionable doubts of immortality accompanied their profound interest in known material existence. The Sistine Madonna stands all-glorious upon her clouds, radiant with human health and vigour and shapeliness. The sense of space around her is admirably perceived, and by its realism gives to her remoteness and majesty: she exists in a design of rarely equalled splendour, which has always won response from man's sensibility to line and form. The ideal of human beauty is used by Raphael, with all sincerity of purpose, for the expression of devotion, and his achievement is not only a great picture but also a great altar-piece. Surviving all the distortion of its countless popular reproductions —and few pictures suffer more from reduction in scale, let alone the coloured travesties in so many ill-suited media—the Sistine Madonna and other sacred masterpieces of this school have had lasting influence on the religious imagery and therefore on the religious thought of Christendom. But they stand for humanism: the divine is shown in human form, and that form must therefore be as nearly perfect as it can be made; yearning and mystery are far from it, and confidence rather than humility is its virtue. "Cur Deus homo" was a question that perturbed the twelfth century, the age of Romanesque; theories of the Incarnation, of divine condescension, were not largely speculated upon in Rome of the early sixteenth century, and its art, that was for so long to dominate our Western vision, was not necessarily the best fitted for the exposition of Christian doctrine.

The Church was not unaware of this. When with the Counter-Reformation art was enlisted as a means of a propaganda for the faith as restated by the Council of Trent, a new union between art and religion was affirmed. The placid certainty of Renaissance art disappears. Once more there are improbable, ingenious postures, violent agitations that cause swinging lines, whirls of drapery in abiding winds, a dazzling excitement of pattern which neglects exact realism. Baroque art became at its finest the negation of humanism, but it was a hard struggle and not always successful. The humanist tradition remained, and baroque painting and sculpture dwindled from designs of strained and daring movement to rationalizations of these same movements by an appeal to pathos. Lustrous-eyed martyrs weep over their contorted limbs, so that we may join in their tears; ecstatic ladies swoon with an outward glance, catching our eye to share their ecstasy. The balance between form and content, the dignity of design as well as of meaning, is forgotten in a popular appeal, for if art is to be "propaganda," then the more popular the better, and the long career of plaster saints, of papier mâché and soft pinks and blues, has begun. The power of an object to aid devotion cannot be measured; it may well be that these products have their place in the cult, but they have brought a long divorce between art in its living vigour and the service of the Church.[1]

[1] A recent interesting study from one angle of the development of religious art in Europe can be found in *Portraits of Christ* (Penguin Books Ltd., 1940), by E. Kitzinger and Elizabeth Senior. The death of the latter by enemy action is a sad blow to the study of the history of art in this country.

Some branches of the Christian Church, however, set up no such images. It was the fact of the great religious wars and controversies that brought religious propaganda nearer the modern sense of the term and made it seek short cuts and easier, more emphatic terms. The Counter-Reformation used art for its own urgent purposes, and in the end debased it: to the Reformed Churches, religious art was suspect and, on the whole, neglected; it was not at least to be used for the decoration of its places of worship. The Protestant visual sense was to find its main satisfaction in woodcuts and etchings, and later in engravings. It was an art that was illustrative and didactic rather than æsthetic and devotional. There were great exceptions. The re-depicting of the biblical story in a new convention was one of the triumphs of Rembrandt's genius, and his work profoundly affected Christian imagination. But it was a gradual penetration, and one in which his etchings played the leading part, for it was long before his religious paintings were widely known (Protestantism had no centres of pilgrimage whence taste might be diffused) and his work is a unique contribution rather than part of a general system. The sacred subject, as far as the Protestant north was concerned, lost its vogue; patronage was lay, not ecclesiastical, and better pleased by portraits, anecdotes and landscape.

Religious art reappeared in fact as historical rather than religious; the story of the Bible provided episodes as suited to the grandiloquence of the historical manner as were the scenes of national history or romance; but the devotional spirit had gone, and the paintings were no longer part of worship. The nineteenth century, however, stressed a theory of art which had religious implications in it, and which had no small influence over religious thought. This was the belief that the virtue of art lay in its truthfulness to nature and to the actual facts as seen. Faithfulness in representation was viewed as an act both of skill and integrity, by which the artist testified through his work. Contemporaneously with the invention of the camera and with the beginnings in France of Impressionism and its great experiments in rendering what the eye actually registered, the Pre-Raphaelites—to take one of the most celebrated groups of the "truth to nature" school—painted with infinite care each twig and leaf, always from the tree itself, studying every detail, leaving out nothing. They were at the same time heirs to the romantic movement, and their subjects were chosen largely from the past, their models dressed in carefully-sought-for garments, which must be accurate in every detail, for here too it was truth that was all-essential. When they drew their subjects from the Bible, the same methods were used, and to Holman Hunt the only solution of biblical illustration was to go and paint his pictures in Palestine. The old tradition of pilgrimage curiously intertwined itself with Victorian England: this was the land as Christ saw it, the clothes and customs those that the unchanging East had handed down. Such paintings had a new authority, and Hunt's religious pictures have a particular place, at least in England, in the formation of Christian visual thought. If he or his Brethren turned to more modern subjects, the same moral fervour inspired them, and their art never lost sight of its "high and noble mission."

This high-minded art, however, was not largely employed by the Church. Morris's tapestries and Burne Jones's windows played some part in decorating the new churches of the Anglo-Catholic movement or in some cases the chapels of Congregationalists or Unitarians: "The Light of the World" was hung in Keble Chapel and a replica in St Paul's: Watts's "Sir Galahad" found its way to Eton College Chapel, but there was no new demand for altarpieces. These religious paintings exercised their influence by being, often very profitably, put on exhibition; some of the more celebrated even went on tour and were regarded as good investments. Patronage of art in fact became more and more a matter of attending exhibitions rather than purchasing pictures, and eventually the artist, with little hope of ready sales, found a new independence of his public. "Art for art's sake" was an ingenious phrase that dignified the inescapable fact that art was very often its own reward. But if that were so, the artist need only please himself, and therefore could use in his work an allusiveness which would have been inadequately explicit for general comprehension. It was a revolutionary period: never had there been such daring experiments in the search for new modes of expression. Content was at a discount, and the emphasis all laid on treatment. The old theory of the patron dictating a subject was replaced by the conception of the artist as a free agent, whose inspiration could not be defined or interfered with, even though it came not from some divine absolute but from an internal conflict caused by some psychological repression. The idea of art as the formulation of holy mysteries, the exposition of sacred fact and doctrine, was outmoded, nor would the average Christian congregation have cared for a sacred edifice decorated by Matisse or Picasso. The Anglican Church in particular has always been averse to scandalizing the faithful: it was fully occupied with another problem, the great transition from fundamentalism to biblical criticism, and it was only in rare instances that the exciting and experimental brilliance of modern art glimmered within ecclesiastical portals.

The breach in fact was very nearly complete. The arts were lively, irresponsible, on the whole "left wing": the churches with their cautious and traditional tastes easily appeared as unenlightened and obstructive. The numerous and fleeting schools, all with their particular theories, squandered paint and sometimes genius in attempts to demonstrate their independence and originality. But with it all, the sphere of visual experience was widening: as once before when the Renaissance established that sense of perspective by which most of us still register the appearance of things, so now new formal values and relationships were being established. But the values were formal. The emphasis was all on the visual reaction. The significance of form, the sensitiveness of line or modelling, were the basis of the fashionable æsthetic. The subject matter was immaterial: a still life was on the whole preferable to an historical subject as less distracting; any admixture of other pleasures of mind or spirit with the appreciation of the thing seen marred the purity of art. The Christian tradition, with its long practice of accepted themes, iconographical conventions, didactic purpose, was the antithesis of all that painting aimed at, and the strength of the tradition

created a curious distrust between both parties. The Gothic revival and the ritualism of the Anglo-Catholic movement had emphasized past traditions: ecclesiastical ornament now became more and more a matter, at its best, of tactful restoration or of a somewhat pedantic imitation; historical accuracy and good taste were its chief virtues, and the passion of art was singularly absent.

There is little doubt that this breach between the Church and art is a devitalizing factor in our religious life today. Its cause lies predominantly in the fact that the two have so constantly been associated on a basis of common purpose, art serving to set forth and illustrate the teaching of the Church, that when art ceases to be employed on scriptural subjects or church decoration it is at once felt that something is amiss and that art in some way is in rebellious opposition. The two seem to stand in so close a relationship that nothing short of clearly reciprocal functions seems satisfactory. But actually it is not in any common content that art and religion find their basic union. The medieval traditions of church patronage, the Tridentine theories of propaganda, the more recent and Protestant use of pictures with a moral, have worked together to identify Christian art with the illustration of biblical scenes, the lives of the saints or the practice of those virtues that the Christian churches most particularly commend; whereas to the virtue of art itself the content is incidental and a matter of no great moment. The Church will not recapture the old association of Christian faith and pictorial genius by any program of suitable themes, nor resolve that other and greater tension between religion and art which has its root in the æsthetic not the narrative qualities of artistic achievement.

The nature and source of the pleasure enjoyed through contact with works of art continues to elude any satisfactory definition. But with all allowance made for the incidental appeal of the story told or the pattern made, no definition can be held satisfactory that does not account for an experience whose intensity transcends any logical explanation and carries with it the conviction that the ordinary limits of the intellect have been surpassed. The contemplation of beauty is thus closely akin to religious mystic speculation, and it is a relationship which can be either supplementary or competitive. There have always been those who ruled their lives by æsthetic criteria, testing conduct by standards which were, consciously or unconsciously, analogous to those by which they judged the great achievements of art, and finding a similar satisfaction in a good deed and a good picture. The common phrase "a graceful act" has about it the suggestion of the decorative, a piece of pattern without much depth of meaning. Everywhere the terms of beauty and goodness become easily interchangeable. But the general opinion has always refused to accept their identity, and ethics and æsthetics have remained distinct, even if both are held to have their common touchstone in some divine absolute. In the maintenance of this distinction the Christian tradition has counted for much: if the experience of beauty through a work of art is a partial revelation of the divine, it is a religious exercise which receives singularly little sanction from the gospel narrative of the life of Christ. That life was lived

within the framework of the Temple ritual—that is, with an implied recognition of artistic media; but it overrules them with the greater demand of the soul's direct communion with God. And from this has come the ascetic, puritanical intolerance of subsidiary goods, which, because they are not the final good, must be hindrances to it and dangerous to single-mindedness. Thus there has always been tension, and men who have found a convincing inspiration in art have been easily antipathetic to a religion which appears to have no place for it, and which may even condemn "the good things," if too devoutly cared for, as being near to idols, or at the best enervating distractions. For the steady contemplation of the standard of high achievement may lead to great fastidiousness in thought and deed and truly adhered to—its abuse can be the most pernicious of excuses—can be the basis of much nobility of life, but it lacks the recognition of salvation as necessary and as only given of divine grace, and it thereby comes nowhere near the central Christian thesis. But if there is singularly little precept in the Gospel exemplar as to the spiritual use of beauty, the teaching and life of Christ are an economical intrusion of the superhuman into history, and neither exclude nor elaborate many of the details by which we live. The wind across the heath and the way of a man with a maid are good things of much intensity, but their full meaning is left to our own powers of deduction and our own life of communion with God, the possibilities of which are revealed through Christ. So too with that sense of reality and satisfaction which comes from that resolution of part of the complexity of life into a unity, which is the mark of a great work of art.

Art for art's sake can never be approved by the Christian as a satisfactory axiom, but neither can art be for the greater glory of God if it degenerates from its own æsthetic integrity into propaganda, traditionalism or inoffensive decoration.

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"School Cert."

Is Scripture a suitable subject for our young people to offer in the School Certificate Examination? One Head says, No: to include it is to secularize and cheapen it. Another says, Yes: to include it is to take it seriously and secure for it the same standards of exactitude which are expected in other subjects. There is something to be said for both views. An unexpected request to act as examiner gave me some opportunity of forming an opinion. It was as much like hard work as anything I have ever done in my life, and when the last paper was reached and no two words seemed to make sense I feared the worst. However, it really was the paper, not me. The experience was in many ways an illuminating one.

There is of course nothing necessarily irreverent in demanding this kind of exactitude. The best candidates satisfied the examiner on this point. The best papers showed not only exactitude but thoughtful assimilation, and sometimes loving penetration. I was deeply im-

pressed by four papers, clearly the fruit not only of careful study but of devout meditation. There is a danger of becoming irreverent only when the examination is a means to something else and Scripture is just another counter in the game, an easy option perhaps. What does it matter whether or not Mary Magdalene was the mother of our Lord, as one candidate affirmed, so long as you get through the exam? Even so it offers an opportunity to the really good teacher.

You can get through School Cert. on a knowledge of the text alone. This is as it should be. Many I hope have, with very little background. From these I learnt that when our Lady visited Elisabeth the presence of our Lord within her womb cleansed John the Baptist from original sin. I thought at first that it was a mistake. I was sorry in the end that I could not give it a mark, but it was not included in my scheme.

Some candidates, on the other hand, were all background. They knew the Introduction and the notes but came to grief on the text, like any B.D. student. From them I got information about the Temple which caused me a lot of research and was cheered on my way by the statement that "the outer court was used as a market and great prophets were made there." There were some odd misconceptions. One candidate thought that the Syrophœnician woman was defending herself against the charge of having given to pet dogs food which ought to have gone to her poor child; many that "the woman anointed Him with a box of alabaster ointment"; others that "He gave up the Holy Ghost"; one that "He gave up the Holy Ghost and the Temple fell to pieces as He had said it would."

There were some things that nobody knew. Most, though not all, remembered that John baptized. Some also knew that he preached. Only a minority knew that his preaching or his baptism had anything to do with repentance. Our Lord too sent His disciples out to preach and to heal. Some knew that they had authority over devils, a very few that they anointed with oil. No one knew that they preached that men should repent. No, not one of my three hundred odd knew that.

It is excusable to get mixed up over such a difficult passage as Mark x, 29-30 (Peter said, Lo, we have left all and have followed thee). I sympathized with the candidate who included uncles and aunts to make sure. Only one candidate remembered "with persecutions" and no one "now in this time." The passage was generally presented as "receive a hundredfold in the world to come." It was more surprising that, in the case of the Rich Young Ruler, while everybody knew that he was to sell what he had and give to the poor, one looked in vain for "and thou shalt have treasure in heaven," and only a few added "Come, follow me"; though had they remembered both these points their comments might have been more penetrating. Many held that Jesus taught that it was impossible for a rich man to "go to heaven." Others that He did not really mean that; there was nothing wrong in having money if you worked hard for it and sacrificed yourself and gave most of it to the poor. A few knew better. They said that the young man had missed a vocation.

On the other hand there were a few things that all did know. They all knew that Peter, if he was not, as some held, the author of the second Gospel, at least either dictated it or inspired it while he was in

prison in Rome. The examiner found this part terribly difficult. The conviction seemed to be derived chiefly from internal evidence, though, while some drew the conclusion from the prominence of Peter in the Gospel and the fact that he is represented as leader, others held that the proof lay in the fact that his modesty led him to retail only those incidents which showed him at a disadvantage. Other incidents such as the gift of the keys, the finding of the coin in the fish's mouth, and the walking on the water, which were to his credit, were deliberately omitted. The examiner became almost hysterically eager to give ten marks for "perhaps," and longed for a reference to Papias. It came. He was Bishop of Hierapolis—or was it Smyrna or Syracuse? His date, one candidate said, was "about 1300 A.D." They knew about Q too. One youth, whose attainments only brought him a meagre twenty per cent., remarked: "Some scholars think that Mark used Q, but I don't think so." Another held that Mark used Q and Papias, "a very reliable authority."

Another thing that every candidate knew was that John Mark, the author of the Gospel, escaped naked from Gethsemane. Many knew just why he was there. Many also knew that he was the man with the waterpot, and they nearly all knew that the Last Supper was held at his mother's house, though only a few knew that that was where Peter went when he came out of prison.

Oddly enough, no one's knowledge of Papias extended to his saying, "he neither heard the Lord nor accompanied Him." Some kept on saying "Mark hated the Gentiles": an interpretation, apparently, of his leaving Paul and Barnabas.

This sort of modern Haggadah which masquerades as critical knowledge is a real danger. Some even knew that Peter's companion in Acts iii was really John Mark. It is to be feared that in ten years' time candidates who know nothing else about John will know that it was not he but John Mark who accompanied Peter.

It must be extremely difficult, starting as one must almost at scratch, to explain in a few words just what was the difference between Pharisees and Sadducees. The Sadducees were both conservative and opposed to the tradition of the elders, nationalists and tolerant of the Romans. Many got it half right. There were some very good answers, however, but every now and then a phrase betrayed the abyss over which they floated. They were hard on the Pharisees, these young people. Even the better informed could say little that was good of them. They all knew they were hypocrites, of course—that was easy; and some remembered, though it was not in the text set, that they always sent a trumpeter before them when they gave alms. One nice child tried to be charitable: "The Pharisees could have been good people if they had tried." *If they had tried!* The examiner was seized by a sort of spasm and almost forgot how urgent it was to get another twenty papers marked in the next three hours if there was to be any sleep at all that night, for in a flash she realized, as never before, how deeply Paul the Pharisee had penetrated, just at that point, the mind of his Lord.

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William Paton

The sudden, wholly unexpected, death of William Paton, when with ripe experience and a wide range of personal contacts in the world-wide Church he had reached an official position of great influence, seems to be at this moment a major catastrophe for the Church in the world, which in faith we must accept but which reason cannot explain.

As chief adviser of those responsible for the missionary work of the Churches, as secretary of the World Council of the Churches in process of formation, as a most constructive mind within the British Council of the Churches, and in many other directions, some of which led to close and confidential contacts with State departments, he had been enabled to begin and continue work on sound and enduring foundations.

From the years before and during the last war, when he was a leading and lovable personality on the staff of the Student Christian Movement in this country, until the day of his death "Bill" Paton was growing in stature and in grace. In the width and variety of the experience that came to him during thirty years, and the way in which he was able to store a massive quantity of factual knowledge in his memory, and assimilate it so that it enriched his mind and ripened his judgment; in the strength of his character, the frugality and simplicity of his life; in his immense capacity for work, and relish for his work, he was outstanding and notable. The fact that year in and year out he maintained an output of work which would have done three men credit, and was able to make copious demands on his physique, may partly explain the swift onset of death.

His knowledge of men and situations, as a result of travel, correspondence and reading, in the Church all over the world, and especially in India and U.S.A., and not only in the Church, was unique among us. It made his public speaking both interesting and compelling. He acquired a rare power of weighing the salient factors in a situation and of forming a shrewd judgment of men and women. On committee, his word was often the last word, not because he spoke much, but because his judgment was deliberate and often he had knowledge of relevant facts which no one else had. In crises he was imperturbable. His confidence was superb and simple and graced by an excellent humour. He feared no man, and yet he was a maker of peace and fellowship, partly because of the breadth of his sympathy and understanding and partly because he cared with all his soul for Christian fellowship.

As a colleague and a friend, he was staunch and utterly reliable. This was one reason why he was so well trusted by churchmen of many nations and denominations, and, indeed, by all who came into contact with him. He cared about personal relationships—it was only a small thing, but he was always punctilious in writing to his hosts and hostesses; and I suppose few men slept more often than he did in strange beds. Although often away from his home for months at a time, and when in England in much demand, he was a great family man, proud of his family, friend as well as father, and greatly sustained by a wife who was wise in spiritual things and was ready to accept with him for the sake of the Gospel both long separations and a very frugal manner

of life. Although immersed in affairs, he was no mean theologian and managed to read at least all the big books as they appeared. And he was a man of God, humble and dutiful, never allowing the activity of his life to destroy the quiet of his own soul. LESLIE SHEFFIELD.

BOOK REVIEWS

COMMUNION IN THE MESSIAH. By Lev Gillet. Lutterworth Press. 12s. 6d.

In the first century A.D. there was, to the embarrassment of the statesmen of the Roman Empire, a Jewish Problem. In the twentieth, to the even greater embarrassment of European statesmen, there is still a Jewish Problem. The persistence of this problem suggests that it is not capable of a purely ethnological, political or economic solution. Upon its deepest level it is a theological problem. The Wandering Jew who remains, however much he may try to be otherwise, an indigestible lump in any body politic is a sign that history is not a process which men can manipulate at will, imposing this or that interpretation of their own upon it, but is rather something grounded in the mystery of the divine election. The Christians of the first century had some perception of this. In the Synoptic Gospels the charge to preach the gospel to the whole world lies side by side with other words which limit the mission of Jesus and His disciples to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. The Fourth Gospel, the most anti-Jewish book in the New Testament, speaks of "the Jews" as an alien people "over there," and yet it insists that salvation is of the Jews, and that there is no gospel of forgiveness and the Spirit except to those who have listened to what the law and the prophets have to say. St Paul, who engaged in the severest attack upon the Jewish Law, was to the last a Hebrew of the Hebrews, and in Romans ix-xi he gropes towards a whole philosophy of history as he endeavours to pierce the mystery of Jewish unbelief. In other words, the relation between the Old Israel and the New is a dialectical one. This perception was carried over into the second century by Justin when he called his apology to the Jews " Dialogue with Trypho," but from then onwards Greek categories of thought swamped the Jewish heritage of Christianity. Of the early Fathers only Jerome appears to have known Hebrew; and while there have been dialogues between isolated individual Jews and Christians, the attitude of the Church in general towards Judaism has been either naïve or intransigent. The naïvety is to be seen in much modern mission work amongst Jews, the literature of which " exhibits crude propaganda, sanctimonious phraseology and an unimaginative outlook"; the intransigence is to be seen in those persecutions by, or with the connivance of, Christians, which provide some of the blackest pages of Church history. Clearly there is need for a fresh approach, yet even Dr Kraemer devotes only two pages of his study of Missions to this matter, and the reports of the Tambaram Conference hardly mention it at all. To this fresh approach Fr Gillet's admirable book is a learned, eloquent and earnest

summons, and it is likely to remain for some time the standard introduction to its subject.

Fr Gillet is a priest of the Orthodox Church with many contacts among Jews and with a vast knowledge of his theme. He introduces the reader to all the relevant literature, and he makes available to the ordinary student information about the piety of Judaism which has been hitherto hidden in recondite sources or in technical theological works. But his erudition is subservient to his missionary purpose, and the chief impression left by his book is its wooing note. He pleads with Christians to abandon the polemics typified by the title "Adversus Judæos" and to return to the genuine dialogue with Judaism indicated by the title of Justin's work. Christianity has a mission to Judaism of which it is the completion; Judaism has a mission to Christianity of which it is the source. There must be between the Old and New Israels a kind of *communio in sacris*. Jew and Christian can come nearer to each other than they yet realize, and by this he does not mean that reconciliation has been effected when liberal Jews with a reduced Judaism have clapsed hands with liberal Christians with a reduced Christianity. So, after summarizing the relations between Jews and Christians down the centuries, he examines the main concepts of Judaism—the Word, the Shekinah, the Holy Spirit, the Atonement, the Election, the Remnant, the Messiah—traces their development in rabbinic thought and piety up to the present day, notes the elements common to Christianity, and does not rest until he has laid bare the theological issue at stake. That issue is, what it has always been, the messiahship of Jesus, but it makes a great difference in what terms and in what temper that messiahship is presented to Jews. The author does not stop to expound any of these matters in very great detail; his aim is to open up the subject in all its aspects, to suggest ways of approach and to call others to co-operate in the same task. The fact that Jews rather than Christians have taken the full weight of totalitarian persecution makes the task more urgent; the fact that Christian scholars have been rediscovering the Jewish background to the Christian gospel makes it more hopeful. But for the most part the rediscovery has been limited to scholars. Too many Christian preachers still caricature Judaism in order to win a verbal and hollow victory for the Gospel, and too many Christian laymen are only puzzled and bewildered by the place which "those Jews" occupy in Christian worship and preaching. A fresh understanding of what "Israel" means brings with it for the Christian a fresh understanding of his own faith, which cannot receive its eschatological fulfilment until all Israel be gathered in.

LINCOLN. C. F. EVANS.

A DIRECTORY OF THE RELIGIOUS LIFE. Issued by the Advisory Council on Religious Communities. S.P.C.K. 5s.

This small volume of some fifty-six pages, though of a technical nature, has a value far beyond its size, and is indeed long overdue. It is now over a hundred years since the Religious Life was revived within the Anglican Communion; and although it is impossible to estimate (some would say to overestimate) the spiritual power that has

been granted to our branch of the Church by those who have served and are serving God in this calling, official recognition has only lately been given. It is noteworthy that only within the last few years has the eminently respectable Crockford recognized the existence of such household names as Cowley, Kelham and Mirfield.

This ignoring by the "official Church" has had its value. It has meant that the "hiddenness" necessary to the right following of the Religious State has been more easily assured; but it has had its dangers also. Although the leaders and founders of the chief Anglican orders have been without exception men and women of wisdom and balance and pre-eminently of common sense, there is always liable to be a number of eccentrics, and eccentrics can do incalculable harm. Difficulties may arise too, not only from eccentricity, but also from the lack of knowledge. The Religious Life has had a long history, and much has been learnt throughout that history by bitter experience; as conditions differ in different countries, so definitions and methods change, and there is always the need for some kind of central regulating authority. It was with the view to helping existing Communities, to advising new ones on their foundation, and to bringing about some general co-ordination, that the Archbishops in 1935 set up the Advisory Council. The Chairman is an Anglican diocesan bishop (at present the Bishop of Oxford), and six of the other twelve members represent Communities.

The *Directory* is designed to give some elementary definitions and information about the Religious Communities, to indicate the solid meaning underlying words and methods, and to warn the unwary of possible pitfalls. It is issued under the authority of the Archbishop of Canterbury, and there is a valuable Introduction by the Bishop of Oxford. Primarily it is "for the use of those concerned with the administration of the Religious Life in the Church of England"; and it is to be hoped that all such will take its instructions and advice seriously. It may also be of value to those who, perhaps wondering whether they have a vocation to this state, need some elementary introduction on technical matters. Of necessity it is elementary, and it could not be other, for to deal properly with a subject of this magnitude would require volumes, but as an introduction and a manual it is, as we have already said, most valuable. It explains the work of the Advisory Council of Religious Communities, and the secretary (the Rev. F. P. Harton, B.D., Baulking Vicarage, Faringdon, Berkshire) is ready to give help to inquirers. We are sure that the setting up of the Council and the issue of this small *Directory* will be for the deepening of that inner life of the Church, that reservoir of spiritual power which by the grace of God will strengthen our hands and inform our minds in the work that lies before us.

EDWARD ELY.

BAPTISM AND CONFIRMATION. By G. C. Richards. S.P.C.K. 2s. 6d.

By collecting the evidence of the early centuries Dr Richards seeks to prove what may be called the high view of Confirmation in its relation to Baptism. His statement of this view, if I have rightly under-

stood it, might be summarized thus: Baptism confers regeneration (*i.e.*, incorporation into the Mystical Body), the removal of Original Sin, and adoption to Sonship; but the specifically Christian gift of the indwelling Spirit is received in Confirmation, which is therefore no mere completion of Baptism but a sacrament essentially distinct. Unlike other writers who have held such a view, Dr Richards considers our practice of separating the two sacraments by an interval of years to be justifiable.

He has compressed a remarkable amount of material into eighty pages—a page is often a mosaic of quotations—and this compression, with an accompanying tendency to obscurity of style, does not make for easy reading, so that one is not always certain if one really has understood the argument. The evidence marshalled for the theory is undeniably impressive, but its grave difficulties hardly receive sufficient consideration, and one wishes that a couple of chapters had been given to discussing the criticisms of this high view that have been made by the Bishop of Brechin and Dr Quick. The point that the two sacraments are essentially distinct does not seem to me to meet the criticism of their separation. On such a theory the Church surely should either restore infant Confirmation or abandon infant Baptism, rather than keep souls in her care for years without the gift of the Spirit. Again, whether it is theological ignorance or native dullness that hinders my understanding I cannot say, but I find it hard to understand how a soul can be regenerate and yet without the presence of the Spirit, incorporated into the Body and yet not indwelt by the Spirit who is the informing principle of the Body, to use Bright's phrase. If habitual grace is the work of the Spirit ("that holiness wherewith our souls are endued in the same instant when we first begin to be temples of the Holy Ghost"), and if the Christian is first indwelt, first becomes a temple of the Spirit, at Confirmation, can there be any infusion of habitual grace at Baptism? Is any significant distinction possible between two operations of the Spirit, one purely external, one internal? Dr Richards seems perhaps to modify the rigour of the theory where he remarks that we "ought not to say more than Cyprian says, 'in the baptized infants the Holy Spirit *begins* to dwell'" (p. 48, author's italics). But will not any such modification overthrow the theory by reducing it to the view that in Confirmation the effect of Baptism is merely completed?

There are, besides the main thesis of the book, a large number of points raised on which one would like to comment if space were available—*e.g.*, what is said on Baptism as the removal of Original Sin (p. 27, *cf.* Article IX); the statement, to me bafflingly obscure, about indelibility (p. 46); the treatment of the Gorham case; the extremely vigorous polemic against Fr Gregory Dix; and the criticism of those who would give the parson a right to refuse baptism in certain cases. It is to be regretted that Dr Richards did not develop at greater length his treatment of Confirmation as the ordination of the laity to their function in the priestly Body, a line of thought of which a good deal might be made.

R. P. McDermott.

Carnlough.

LETTER TO ANDREW. By Rom Landau. Faber. 8s. 6d.

RENASCENCE. By Nicodemus, Author of *Midnight Hour*. Faber. 8s. 6d.

Both these books offer a sympathetic examination of the prospects for a revival of religion which will not be exclusively Christian. Neither of the authors seems to be very clear about the relation between the spiritual vitality which he desires and the Christianity which he professes. There is more than one kind of spiritual life, and a valley of dry bones may be better than a place of worms. The Nazis, for instance, are very much alive. Both our authors are vehemently anti-Nazi, but do they know the razor-edge of decision which divided orthodox Christians in Germany from the national religious awakening?

Mr Landau's religion is based upon belief in Natural Law. To this he adds an intelligent understanding of the power of prayer. He has read much of the science of the spiritual life in Christian and non-Christian classics from the Sufis to the Spanish mystics, and he understands a good deal about human nature from his own shrewd observations. He thinks that he is not interested in theology, but he has a whole chapter on fate and freewill, and a passage on the Hindu doctrine of *Karma*, and he quotes Origen and St Basil the Great as well as St John of the Cross, though in one place he seems to identify the divine science with subtle attempts to explain away the New Testament teaching on petitionary prayer. He does, however, seem curiously blind to the effect of different conceptions of God on the spiritual life. But perhaps this limitation makes his book the more useful to the perplexed person who wants to pray but as yet has no idea what he believes. It contains a certain proportion of platitude, but much common sense, and the minimum of mere mystification. Mr Landau's own personal religion is probably very eclectic and esoteric, but he does not parade this. His criticism of the Church is moderately put and always has a real point. Unlike our older humanitarian critics, he does not like to see the clergy at political meetings or diplomatic dinners, and suspects them of wasting time which ought to be given to their spiritual message. He would have them live in detachment from the world and devote themselves to the cultivation and increase of the spiritual life, for he passionately believes in the validity of religious experience. The trouble is that he wants to have his cake and eat it, to keep that experience individual and incommunicable, incapable of any authoritative intellectual expression. He does not see that this kind of religion can be used as cement for any structure which the powers of this world may see fit to erect. The remedy for weak theology mingled with politics is a theology strong enough to impinge upon politics, not an unpolitical and intellectual religion. Mr Landau's limitations will be almost too obvious to readers of THEOLOGY, who would miss something worth having if they did not study his observations.

Renascence is a very much more impressive book at first sight and will be begun with enthusiasm by admirers of *Midnight Hour*. Three of the papers in it are older than that journal. One of them is an open letter on the implication of Christians in the economy of capital-

ism, familiar in content if sensational in tone. The other two are a plea for a return to religious tradition on pragmatic grounds, and a defence of the religious element in the Renaissance, written in a style reminiscent of John Addington Symonds, with purple passages about Florence. The new part of the book has more in the same vein about medieval English poetry and a night with the Home Guard. Quotations jostle one another from Rilke, T. S. Eliot, Kierkegaard, Keats, Walter Pater, L. H. Myers, and Jung, who are all invoked to support a single pattern of "the integration of personality" by "life-death-resurrection." We gather from a long chapter on personality, individuality, and character, that only a few of us ever attain to personality. These few will find life in the world so unbearable that they must live apart in communities, either in the world or right outside it, and in the last chapter the rule of St Benedict is adapted to their needs. But nothing is said of the relation of these communities to the Church. On the contrary, it is distinctly implied that the "Servants of the Spirit" need not be Christian but may profess a "federal faith" which agrees with all the "revealed religions." This faith, however, has nothing in common with the "religion of fertility," a term which "Nicodemus" stretches to include belief in emergent evolution.

It is this opposition between spirituality and fertility which I personally find most disturbing, here and in *Midnight Hour*. The effort to participate in the rhythm of the seasons, as in an order which goes on outside ourselves and beyond our own control, seems to me a true if rudimentary reaching out towards sacrificial worship. Where it is present now in the response of men and women to the world and to their work, it deserves our sympathy and our aid in its enlargement, even when it may be mixed up with all kinds of muddled biology. Natural religion is not enough, but a resentment against the natural which veils itself uneasily behind the exotic language of debased romanticism is not supernatural, but unnatural, religion.

KELHAM. GEORGE EVERY, S.S.M.

SHORTER NOTICES

The Foreign Missions of the Russian Orthodox Church (S.P.C.K., 3s. 6d.), by Serge Bolshakoff, impresses us the more with the activity of the Russian Church since the author does not conceal such cases of slackness or corruption as have occasionally occurred. We cannot test the accuracy of the history. We can only say that after getting a little bogged in the early chapters, perhaps owing to the sultry weather, we soon got really interested. The reader is considerately treated and given just enough of secular history to find his bearings. We notice three recurring factors which indicate the resemblance to, and difference from, Anglicanism—the attitude of the State, friendly more often than hostile, the care taken to have the Scriptures and Liturgical books translated into the vernacular, and the necessity that married priests should, by mutual consent, separate from their wives and take monastic vows before elevation to the Episcopate.

At the present day there are flourishing Churches in Japan and Alaska as well as Missions in Korea, Iran, China and Manchuria—apart from the Russian Dispersion in Europe and the Americas. We get some interesting glimpses of the Polish persecution of Orthodoxy after 1920, and of relations with Nestorians and Uniates. The author wins our gratitude by departing a little from his subject and giving us a picture of the position of the Church in Russia today—readers of his *The Christian Church and the Soviet State* will find some fresh information here. Obnoxious laws have still to be expunged, yet, especially since the war began, religious freedom is beginning to return. Congregations consist mostly of women and children and old and middle-aged men, but the number of young men is beginning to increase.

Lamps of Anthropology (Manchester University Press, 7s. 6d.) is a collection of lectures by John Murphy, Professor of Comparative Religion, with connecting chapters. It is highly learned, yet clear and interesting, and is probably the first popular work to deal with the Indus civilization and to make the necessary rectifications to theories about the origins of Indian religions (which are the author's pet subject). The author's Literalism is not without its *repentirs* and concessions, but he does not fail to explain creeds and the dogmas of Divine Sovereignty and Sacramental efficacy (" magic") as atavistic survivals. Countless theories are proposed in the most pleasant and persuasive terms, until we feel there must be something in it. Yet this delightful and masterly book only serves to strengthen a personal persuasion of our own that Comparative Religion, when followed for its own sake, is an enemy of all theological or existential thinking. From the depths of our Comparative Ignorance we suspect that the author's point of view makes him a little too reassuring. The Bible presents us with a paganism that is at once more tempting and more terrible. The Prophets and Historical Books tell us of Moloch and Baal and Ashtoreth, not to speak of the Quadoshoth and the Quadoshim, with all the horror of human sacrifice and the hot lust of fertility rites; while St Paul sums it up in the first two chapters of Romans.

The People's Prophecy (Andrew Dakers, 5s.). To us Lamennais seems rather splendid fustian, but, if you think him worth reading, you will find his French translated into a very similar fervent and rhetorical English by Mr Cuthbert Reavely. The translator has added some interesting notes in which he attributes to Lamennais a gnostic theory of creation similar to that held by William Law in his mystical phase.

Meditations on the Life of Jesus (S.P.C.K., 6d.), by the Bishop of Bombay, is a brief and well-arranged series of meditations in the words of Scripture with suitable acts of devotion. It will suit any church bookstall.

The Convert's Catechism, compiled by Rev. A. Gits, S.J. (Burns Oates and Washbourne, 1s. 3d.). Adherents of "False Religions" who are gravitating towards Rome will find profound doctrines stated in very simple words.

Notes on the Law and Practice of Marriage, by Lt.-Col. E. C. Arden (S.P.C.K., 1s.), is a useful summary of the legal and military requirements for valid marriage.

One Church, an Appeal to the Ordinary Christian, by the Bishop of Lichfield (S.P.C.K., 9d.), is about reunion. The author's point of view is sensible, tolerant, and comprehensive. He favours the South Indian scheme. We hope that deeper theological thinkers will also appeal to the ordinary Christian in as clear and pleasant a manner. But indeed one has. Karl Barth's *The Church and the Churches* (James Clarke, 1s.), though at its appearance it was slightingly reviewed in these columns and dismissed as unintelligible, will be found to treat the subject of schism more radically and more comprehensively—and also comprehensibly enough for the ordinary Christian.

C. W. Quin.

Drumlane Rectory, Co. Cavan.

Judaism and World Order. By Hugh J. Schonfield. Secker and Warburg. 4s. 6d.

The Christian Failure. By Charles Singer. Gollancz. 3s. 6d.

The Great Hatred. By Maurice Samuel. Gollancz. 3s. 6d.

Like the creations of Jerome K. Jerome's fancy, these "three men in a boat"—its name is "Nineteenth Century Liberalism"—all have their particular idiosyncrasies. Mr Schonfield tells us his book is "intended to be a popular companion to several volumes on *Christianity and World Order*, by the Bishop of Chichester and others." He shows that there is a certain truth in the Nazi lie about the Jews' secret conspiracy to dominate the world. According to Mr Schonfield they have, in fact, inspired the whole idea of a New Order—the domination of the world by the love of God, and the principles of brotherhood, justice, and mutual service. Only by the close co-operation of Judaism and Christianity as kinsmen can the peril in which humanity stands today be averted. Mutually fortifying each other in a common world citizenship, they can yet show forth the exemplification of a "pattern people," "a holy nation," on the basis of moral force, social justice, and corporate service. There is much more in this strain, finely put, and often thought-provoking. The reader will learn something of the spirit of Judaism at its best from the description of the Synagogue as a communal home (p. 23) and of the idealism underlying Zionism (pp. 62-3). But the assumption that by such means "God's Kingdom will come on earth at last" may not appear to be a legitimate interpretation of the Messianic Hope to those who are not travelling in the liberal boat.

Dr Singer's book was ill conceived, and can best be described as impatient. A scholar of his standing could have written something much better than this. He makes some very sound observations to the effect that the strength of Humanism consists in the fact that it has developed a philosophy which has come to terms with Science, whereas traditional Christian theology has not. His charge that the Christian churches utterly failed to respond to the call of human suffering from 1933 onwards, except where their own adherents were involved, is amply justified, and needed saying; but his impatience frequently obscures his vision. Let one example suffice: "those who have read the life of Martin Luther or Alexander VI need not be astonished at the

life of Adolf Hitler" (p. 71). The Christian failure appears to consist chiefly in an inability to look at life through the eyes of the Religion of Humanity.

The particular idiosyncrasy displayed by the third man in the boat is that Anti-Semitism is to be equated with "Christophobia." Anti-Jewishness is marked by feelings of distaste, distrust, and perhaps contempt; anti-Semitism by fear, convulsive horror, and vast delusions of persecution. The cue words for anti-Jewishness are "kike," "sheeny," "Ikey-Mo," and "ol' clo' man." For anti-Semitism they are "world corrupter," "international plotter," "enemy of civilization." Without attempting an analysis of the historical causes of anti-Semitism, Maurice Samuel assumes that it is simply "the expression of the concealed horror of Christ the Jew, the world representative of a system of thought which stands up as the universal ideological enemy of the Nazi-Fascist revolution" (p. 40). In order to justify this assumption he has to make a further one—in common with the other two men in the boat—namely, that "Judaism" and "Christianity" are merely alternative titles for what he calls "the Judæo-Christian morality, or philosophy, and its ideal sanction, God" (p. 68), "a philosophy of the non-force destiny of man" (*ibid.*).

C. W. Dugmore.

Dulwich.

Dr Reinhold Niebuhr in his Gifford Lectures defines the basic distinction between religions as the difference between those which expect and those which do not expect a Christ. "A Christ is not expected wherever the meaning of life is explained from the standpoint of either nature or supernature in such a way that a transcendent revelation of history's meaning is not regarded as either possible or necessary." True religion, according to *God's Carpet*, by L. le Mesurier (Methuen, 8s. 6d.), a book dedicated "to religious people of all faiths inside and outside Churches," would seem to fall decidedly within the latter category. For this author there can be no "final" conclusions. The selfsame truth is in the heart of all religions, and the chief religious need today is not for analysis but for synthesis. In this book we are offered one such individual synthesis, consisting mainly of Eastern mysticism and scientific rationalism with a flavour of Christ's teaching divorced from the august claim of His Person. In a sadly illuminating Epilogue Mrs le Mesurier makes plain that in spite of her wide sympathies she has never understood the biblical religion of her upbringing.

In contrast to this, Canon E. S. Abbott, in *Foothold of Faith* (Dacre Press, 1s. 6d.), is convinced that "the word spoken, which will lead to Christian prayer which shall be the spring of Christian action, is a Biblical word, and that the things which God has done in Christ are the source of Christian prayer." In these three addresses to the Church Union School of Sociology in 1942 we are admitted into a deep understanding of the glory of our Lord's Passion and Resurrection against the darkness and death of this and all ages. In the ever-continuing redemptive work of that Divine action and passion it is our vocation, solely by incorporation into the Body of Christ, to have an effective share. This little book demands and deserves much study and meditation.

Simeon's Song, by Father Andrew, S.D.C. (Mowbray, 1s. 9d.), is a series of meditations, equally biblical, on the *Nunc Dimittis*, instinct with quiet devotion and sanctified common sense, from which all may profit.

More "Catholic" but less universal in its appeal is *Queen of Peace*, by L. Sherley-Price, Chaplain, R.N. (Dacre Press, 3s. 6d.), on the titles in the Litany of our Lady. It will help the prayers of those who can without difficulty derive the "mystery of Mary" from the simple yet profound narrative of the New Testament.

The Priest and Penance, by Kenneth Mackenzie (Mowbray, 1s. 9d.), is all that we have learnt to expect from the Bishop of Brechin. Induced to write this book by the practical needs of his diocese, he addresses it to the priest "who has never had anything to do with sacramental confession and has very rarely, or perhaps never, made his own confession." In 62 pages the Bishop expounds the theory and practice of hearing Confessions with a simplicity, lucidity and precision which could hardly be bettered. Preb. Charles Gillett adds a useful bibliography for future study. Those who need it (and they are many) cannot be too grateful for this book.

Harry Woolcombe, Bishop, Ed. Bishop Bernard Heywood (Mowbray, 5s.), is a symposium which will doubtless provide a memorial for the late Bishop's numerous friends. But it is not a biography, and its unimaginative composition and the tedium of its repetitions will scarcely extend the just reputation of a very loving and lovable personality.

Collectivism and the Catholic Tradition Regarding Property, by David G. Peck (Dacre Press, 1s.), ably discusses the Catholic tradition in this matter and indicates the "wide disparity" between this and "the collectivism now presented to us as the only way out of the squalor and chaos of capitalism." Another Dacre Paper, *Religious Drama and Worship*, by Phyllis M. Potter (1s.), presents a suggestive parallel between genuinely religious drama and the Eucharist as linking Time and Eternity.

HAIGH. G. E. P. Cox.

REPETITION. By SØREN KIERKEGAARD. Oxford University Press. 14s.

This is surely Kierkegaard's most difficult and least satisfactory book. In a concluding letter to the reader, Kierkegaard seems to take special pleasure in the fact that the reviewer will be certain to misunderstand it. I, therefore, hesitate to say what I think it means, even after reading it twice, and parts of it thrice. Each re-reading made it less intelligible. So I must not read it a fourth time! What is Kierkegaard seeking to say in this book, which is mostly romance with an occasional philosophical aside? Let me attempt to answer the question, but with the proviso that my answer may be hopelessly wide of the mark.

Repetition, says Kierkegaard, is the nature of reality, and by Repetition he seems to mean that life is a process in which experience is repeating itself on different levels of perception and being. Repetition is the Kierkegaardian translation of the Hegelian concept of Mediation, which is the process by which the conflict between thesis and antithesis is resolved into synthesis. But Kierkegaard presents this process,

not in systematic, formal definition, but in the form of a story of a young man who falls in love, discovers that he cannot consummate the love in marriage, and therefore breaks the engagement. The core of that experience, after suffering and disintegration, is repeated on a new level. Its conflicts and contradictions are finally resolved in a new integration. The process of resolution is a religious one. The young man has to move from a poetic attitude to a religious. This is, of course, the story of Kierkegaard himself and his disastrous love-affair with Regina. The past persists. It can be redeemed only on a new level, a higher spiral, which must be religious and not æsthetic.

This is not the book on which to begin the study of Kierkegaard. In fact it should be the last. It is well bound and printed. But need it cost fourteen shillings?

D. R. Davies.

Hull.

Son of Light. Anonymous. Andrew Dakers. 9s. 6d.

The importance of this book lies in the fact that it contains the kind of pretentious nonsense which is likely to make an appeal to those unhappy modern minds which have cut themselves off from the true source of religious inspiration and are seeking a new faith of their own. The Son of Light is Shemesh, a prophet of our times, and his story is put in the form of a modern myth. From his birth onward Shemesh possesses a unique personality, and after many adventures and vicissitudes he becomes a king. He governs his people strictly in accordance with his own prophetic principles, and such is the happiness and prosperity of his people that other rulers grow jealous of him and set out to destroy his power. Faced with this crisis, his own people lose their faith in him and are defeated. The victorious kings demand Shemesh's wife as a hostage, but he refuses to surrender her. Having conveyed her to a place of safety he delivers himself up to death in her place confident that his spirit and his work will live on and be completed in the child she will bear him.

Such are the bare bones of the story, which spins itself out in tedious fashion over a couple of hundred pages. But the tale is simply the peg upon which is hung an enormous amount of teaching on all kinds of subjects relevant to the living of the good life in society. For Shemesh is not only a ruler but something of a Messiah; a second Moses; the giver of a new law. On examination the teaching which he offers as the new gospel is simply a refashioning of the ideas of Rousseau, Nietzsche and Bertrand Russell. For instance, the state is that which makes strong men weak, free men slaves, living men dead. Again, "the weak are created that they may pave with their bodies the path of the strong." Farther on it is stated: "'The world is a world of the strong and he who is weak is crushed between the millstones of injustice."

In this philosophy the unforgiveable sin is to believe in anybody but oneself, "For all being is nothing but belief in oneself," and apparently the core of the self is desire and the ultimate gift of this new saviour is the strength to desire.

Naturally with a view of life such as this Shemesh has much to say

about sex. In love one must be true to oneself and happy; to be bound by the conventions of society and morality is weakness and folly. "Love," he says, "cannot be sinful; for there is but one sin: not to have used one's life."

In the face of all this one can hardly accept the opinion on the dust-cover of the book that it represents "the recovery of the shining jewel of authentic Truth from the rubbish heap of contemporary life." The moral and social diseases of contemporary life demand more drastic treatment than is represented by this fresh prescription of the mixture as before.

J. H. JACQUES.

PENTROBIN.

CORRESPONDENCE

THE OLD TESTAMENT AND THE JEWS

To the Editor of THEOLOGY.

SIR,

I wonder if any readers of THEOLOGY have speculated, as I have, whether Jewish theology would develop, as Christian theology has done, into a post-liberal phase which, while acknowledging the established results of Higher Criticism, would recover the positive values of the older orthodoxy in a new feeling for the seriousness of the Bible as the Word of God.

I have found what I was looking for in a German-speaking Palestinian Jewish writer named Schalom Ben Chorin. In an interesting little pamphlet entitled *Die Christus frage an die Juden*, published by the Romena-Verlag, Jerusalem, Ben Chorin replies to a lecture by a Christian theologian named G. B. Sloan. Both lectures were given at Haifa in 1941. Sloan's thesis is similar to that of Wilhelm Vischer's *Das Christus Zeugnis des Alten Testaments* and on similar lines to that in Fr Hebert's *The Throne of David.*

Ben Chorin acknowledges that a Christian, from the standpoint of faith in Christ, inevitably sees the Old Testament with different eyes from a Jew. He recognizes the sincerity of the Christian's faith and the impossibility of refuting it by rational argument. There are, however, two meanings, for Christian and Jew alike. There is the historical meaning—*i.e.*, what the author meant in his own historical context; and there is the "real" meaning, as Ben Chorin calls it—*i.e.*, what the Holy Ghost is saying through it to the believer. In elucidating the first meaning Jewish and Christian scholars may help one another and may reach agreement. In the second meaning, however, Jew and Christian must part company, the one taking his stand on the revelation of Sinai, and the other on that in Jesus Christ. In illustration of this Ben Chorin takes the Servant Song of Isaiah liii, and incidentally makes an interesting contribution to its "historical" meaning. He maintains that it was written by a disciple of Isaiah about his martyred master—martyred, according to rabbinic tradition, by being sawn

asunder. For the Jew the "real" meaning is Israel, the people of God; for the Christian it is Christ.

Ben Chorin examines at length Sloan's contention that Law and Sacrifice in the O.T. point beyond themselves and find their fulfilment in Jesus Christ. This he finds untenable. He questions Brunner's theory that the Law as law is the consequence of the Fall (*Man in Revolt*), maintaining that Law is already given before the Fall, and therefore the Fall is the consequence of the Law (Gen. ii, 17). Is this an effective criticism? On the question of sacrifice he has some very interesting things to say. He points out how Christian theologians, from the author of Hebrews onwards, have been blinded by the imagined importance of the "sin offering." This is only one among many sacrifices which form an articulate system arriving not so much at forgiveness of sin as at communion with the deity sacramentally present in the sacrificial offering. But this has already been recognized by Christian scholars (*cf.* J. O. Cobham, "The Sacrifice of the Covenant" in *The Parish Communion*, Ed. Hebert). It can be equally asserted that in this sense too sacrifice finds its fulfilment in Christ.

This interesting attempt to prove that the O.T. is not an incomplete book is productive of several incidental insights; but it would have been sounder had the author admitted its incompleteness, but maintained that the Event to which Law and Sacrifice both point has not yet happened—an idea which he shows here and there is not altogether unacceptable to him.

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BOOKS RECEIVED

(Mention here neither implies nor precludes subsequent comment.)

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS (for UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS): Shirle Jackson Case, *The Christian Philosophy of History* (n.p.).
CHAPMAN AND HALL: H. J. Massingham, *The Tree of Life* (8s. 6d.).
CHURCH BOOK ROOM: A. Mitchell, *This Service* (10s.).
PUBLISHED BY THE AUTHOR AT EVENLEY, BRACKLEY, NORTHANTS: H. R. Harvey, *Catholic Free Church of England* (1s. post free).
JERUSALEM CHAMBER FELLOWSHIP OF PRAYER: *Reconciliation and Reconstruction* (6d.).
KEGAN PAUL: W. Stark, *The Ideal Foundations of Economic Thought* (15s.).
LONGMANS: E. L. Mascall, *He Who Is* (15s.).
MOWBRAYS: A. Sinker, *Daffodils in Bermondsey* (3s. 6d.); E. R. Lewis, *Give Heed unto Reading* (7s. 6d.); W. H. G. Holmes, *The Alphabet of Holiness* (4s. 6d.); G. Sampson, C.R., *New Testament Readings on the Blessed Sacrament* (1s. 9d.); P. Green, *The Moral Condition of Great Britain To-day* (1s.); A. W. Hopkinson, *Against the Grain* (1s. 9d.).
NISBET: L. Hodgson, *The Doctrine of the Trinity* (15s.).
S.P.C.K.: R. M. French, *The Pilgrim Continues His Way* (3s. 6d.); J. Dalby, *The Catholic Conception of the Law of Nature* (2s. 6d.); W. W. S. March, *Aids to Worship in the Forces and Parishes* (6d.).

Printed in Great Britain by
Billing and Sons Ltd., Guildford and Esher